Excise free life saving drugs

1703. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers have requested the Ministry of Finance to make the life saving drugs excise free for the benefit of the public;

(b) if so, the details of proposals sent by that Ministry and Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) by when a final decision in the matter is likely to be taken and announced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers had proposed that in order to minimize the incidence of duties on life saving drugs, there may not be any excise duty or customs duty on such drugs. Alternatively, they recommended that life saving drugs should be subjected to an additional duty of customs, which should be equivalent to the applicable excise duty in order to countervail the latter.

(c) The Government has examined the recommendation and taken necessary action in the budget proposals, effective from the 1st March, 2002.

Misappropriation of funds by *M/s.* Golden forest Ltd.

1704. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that M/s Golden Forest (India) Ltd., SCO, 834, Mani Majra, Chandigarh, had collected huge amounts from the public in 1997 as fixed deposits and recurring deposits;

(b) whether it is a fact that the company in refusing to repay that amount to the public;

(c) if so, whether Government would hold an enquiry into

the affairs of the company and provide relief to innocent investors; and

(d) whether Government propose to take action against the company?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) to (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Control on Use of Residential Telephones

+1705. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would issue at the earliest the guidelines to check or control the unlimited payment of residential talephone bills of concerned officers of all MinistriesDepartments; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, and if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) and (b) Instructions already exist prescribing a ceiling of 650 free local calls on bimonthly basis to the officials entitled for residential telephone facility on Government account.

Stipulation on Number of Telephone calls

†1706. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to issue orders for stipulating the number of telephone calls and making the payment mandatory by the respective officers in respect of those telephone calls which are in excess to stipulated limits; and

(b) if so, the time by when the orders are likely to be issued and effected and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) and (b) Under the

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.